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AM-CHILDREN

PARIS, MAY 16, REUTER -- THE CENTRAL AFRICAN EMPIRE ADMITTED TODAY THAT ABOUT 150 STUDENTS HERE ARRESTED DURING A DEMONSTRATION LAST MONTH BUT DENIED A CHARGE BY AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL THAT UP TO 100 OF THEM HAD BEEN KILLED.

THE CENTRAL AFRICAN NEWS AGENCY (ACAP) SAID IN A MESSAGE TO REUTERS THAT ABOUT 150 UNIVERSITY AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS, ALL OVER THE AGE OF 16, WERE ARRESTED IN THE DEMONSTRATIONS APRIL 18, BUT THEY WERE ALL RELEASED ON THE ORDERS OF EMPEROR BOKASSA APRIL 20.

QUOTING A STATEMENT BY PRIME MINISTER HENRI MAIDOU ON BANGUI RADIO TODAY, ACAP SAID ANOTHER 140 DEMONSTRATORS HAD FLED ACROSS THE BORDER INTO ZAIRE TO ESCAPE FROM POLICE.

THE ZAIREAN AUTHORITIES HAD NOTIFED THE GOVERNMENT IN BANGUI THAT THE YOUTHS WERE IN ZAIRE, ACAP SAID.

"THE CENTRAL AFRICAN GOVERNMENT CALLED ON THE CHILDREN TO RETURN TO THEIR FAMILIES, WHICH THEY DID. THE TEMPORARY ABSENCE OF THESE CHILDREN MAY HAVE LED TO THE BELIEF THAT THEY HAD DISAPPEARED," THE COMMUNIQUE SAID.

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
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